UK HealthCare and Norton Healthcare officials announced in November that they have signed a Memorandum of Agreement and plan to join forces to improve health care for all Kentuckians.

In a joint statement, UK Executive Vice President for Health Affairs Dr. Michael Karpf and Norton Healthcare President and CEO Stephen A. Williams said: “Our goal is to develop a pre-eminent statewide system of care that will expand the services available to all Kentuckians in their local hospitals. We are also focusing on developing stronger clinical partnerships throughout the Commonwealth. By working together our physicians and other health care professionals will provide a wider range of higher quality services more efficiently while also assuring immediate access to the best subspecialists in Kentucky.”

Action focused on improving health

The decision to formalize ongoing alliances in clinical programs, workforce, education and research came after leadership from both organizations met to assess how best to serve patients within a large geographic area in a rapidly changing environment. Karpf and Williams cited the fact that Kentucky has very poor health rankings in both its adult and pediatric populations, with particular challenges and opportunities in the areas of cancer, heart disease, stroke/neuroscience and diabetes.

Both UK HealthCare and Norton Healthcare, Karpf and Williams noted, share a common vision and commitment to provide leadership to address these daunting challenges.

Building statewide system of care

During its recent strategic planning process, UK HealthCare, the clinical enterprise of the University of Kentucky, focused on continuing the academic medical center’s evolution into a destination provider of advanced subspecialty care in Kentucky and surrounding states. Consequently, UK HealthCare’s leadership team believes Norton Healthcare, Kentucky’s largest comprehensive health care system and an existing teaching site for UK’s pharmacy and nursing programs, is an excellent choice to collaborate on a rational statewide system of care to improve access and quality of medical services. The affiliation is expected to produce significant benefits in at least four areas:

- **Clinical services:** Strengthening programs for advanced patient care in cancer, neuroscience, cardiology and organ transplants.
- **Teaching programs:** Expanding teaching programs, which will increase the number of medical professionals and address the severe shortage facing the state, particularly in key practice areas such as obstetrics/gynecology, neuroscience, primary care and family practice.
- **Children’s health:** Creating new opportunities to expand a full range of services, from primary care pediatrics to subspecialty care, thereby ensuring that children in the Commonwealth do not have to leave the state to access care. Additionally, as the stewards of Norton Healthcare’s Kosair Children’s Hospital and Kentucky Children’s Hospital, the

UK HealthCare, Norton Healthcare collaborating to improve health care, access for Kentuckians
The new emergency department, which is twice as large as the previous facility (or roughly equivalent in size to a football field), opened to patients this past summer.

“Not only for emergency medicine, but also for primary care, the new facility is a wonderful addition to our community,” said Dr. Michael Karpf, UK’s executive vice president for health affairs. “It will allow us to provide the high-quality care that our community deserves, while also providing a safe and welcoming environment for our patients.”

The new emergency department includes three centers: the Mahkenna David Pediatric Emergency Center, with a separate entrance, its own registration and waiting areas, and special treatment facilities for young patients; the UK Level I Trauma Center; and an Adult Emergency Center that includes Express Care, an area designed for patients with less serious needs including a “chair-centric” room where patients are quickly evaluated and treated while they rest in comfortable recliners.

The emergency department includes the latest technological advances, including electronic documentation of high-risk cases, computerized order entry, Wi-Fi coverage in waiting areas, and wireless and mobile X-ray and endoscopy carts to speed delivery of care to patients. The emergency department is part of the first phase of UK HealthCare’s $760 million expansion project. In 2011, the first two floors of a new 12-story patient care facility also will be completed.

“Everyone hopes they never need high-level trauma care and that a mass casualty situation will never occur in Lexington, but we are reassured in knowing that if the unexpected happens, our community is equipped and ready to handle any emergency situation because of the UK Chandler Emergency Department,” said Lexington Mayor Jim Newbery.

“Furthermore, this new facility will only enhance Lexington’s growing reputation as a national center for quality health care.”

For more information about the UK Chandler Emergency Department, please go to www.ukhealthcare.uky.edu/new/ED/index.asp.

New UK Chandler Hospital on target for 2011 opening

The 12-story red brick exterior of the new UK Albert B. Chandler Hospital now stands tall as part of the skyline of the university’s medical campus. The shell of the structure – now nearly completed – redefines the landscape of UK’s south campus and is poised to redefine the future of health care in Kentucky.

The next milestone in the phased plan is the opening of the first two floors of the hospital in spring 2011. At that time, a total of 128 beds, including 48 intensive care beds and 80 acute care beds, will be utilized in the new hospital. Also opening will be the atrium lobby, auditorium, chapel, waiting rooms, gift shop and coffee shop.

The new parking garage at Transplant and Limestone, which opened in November 2007, and the new state-of-the-art Chandler Emergency Department, which opened in July 2010, are also counted as part of the building’s first phase.

Over all, the new 1.2 million-square-foot facility is designed to support patient care for the next 100 years and, once fully fit out, will replace the original Chandler Hospital.

The new hospital, to be fully fit out and occupied in six to 10 years, will have 512 large, private patient rooms, wireless Internet and cell phone access throughout the building, and more than 25 state-of-the-art operating rooms. It will also include unique features such as a 305-seat auditorium, which will be used for educational purposes, state-of-the-art operating rooms. It will also include unique features such as a 305-seat auditorium.

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“We at UK HealthCare are committed to building an outstanding hospital that will provide the most advanced subspecialty care found anywhere in the region,” said Dr. Michael Karpf, executive vice president for health affairs at UK. “More importantly, our physicians and our facilities will make it possible for Kentuckians to receive exemplary advanced care close to home, without the need to leave the state.”

A community open house is planned as part of the building’s grand opening celebration this May. Visit ukhealthcare.uky.edu/new for updates as they develop.